

chloride of iron, in half-drachm doses, well diluted with water. We owe chiefly to Dr. Russell Reynolds the important fact that the tincture of iron is an efficient remedy in acute rheumatism. It cuts short the duration of the disease, and what is even more important, lessens the danger of cardiac complications. Dr. Anstie pointed out another fact—that the tincture of iron has the power of prophylaxis—of preventing attacks that are impending. Whether it acts by virtue of its acid or its iron is not known, but it is probably the former. Dr. Ridge has shown that the mineral acids are decidedly curative in acute rheumatism. Alkalies are curative in rheumatism! mineral acids are curative in rheumatism! What strange contradiction is this? After all, gentlemen, this opposition of agents is more apparant than real. It is not difficult to conceive that whilst alkalies neutralize the acid of rheumatism, the mineral acids may prevent its formation. We may, therefore, assume that the virtues of the chloride of iron are due to its acid; but we should not obtain the same good results from chlorhydric acid, for iron aids in the restoration of the blood, and is useful for this reason.

I direct, as I have already indicated, and as you have witnessed, thirty minims of the tincture well diluted with water, every four hours. The affected joints are wrapped in cotton if the patient desire it, but otherwise are simply kept at rest, and if the pain is severe, some small blisters are applied around the joint, but not on it. I have treated many cases with the iron alone, and with iron aided by moderate doses of alkalies and blisters. The best results have been obtained in these weak and anæmic subjects by the iron and blisters, and an occasional laxative of Rochelle salt. The treatment by blisters alone is a highly efficient plan, and is by no means so painful and disagreeable as it appears at first sight. The blisters remarkably relieve the pain, and patients soon learn this and ask for their repetition. But the blisters do more—they bring about a more alkaline condition of the blood, and render the urine less acid or bring it to neutral, or even to alkaline. I do not, as the French physician (Dr. Dechilly) who proposed the method, apply large blisters over the whole of the affected joints, but as Dr. Davies, of the London Hospital, who introduced the method into England, apply smaller blisters to encompass the joints. To be more explicit: I have small blisters, the size of a silver dollar, placed around the joint, leaving an interval between for succeeding applications.

In these weak subjects a few blisters are applied, and the joint is supported at rest, but the tincture of iron is the chief remedy. Managed in this way, the duration of the cases rarely exceeds two weeks; heart complications are infrequent, and the patient's strength is

conserved so that convalescence is rapid and relapses uncommon.

The cases of the second class require different management. They are the fat and flabby subjects, often excessive consumers of malt liquors, who suffer habitually with acid indigestion and the usual concomitants of this state. Such subjects present a delusive appearance of good health, but they have a weak circulation, are easily put out of breath, tire on the least exertion, and often suffer from lumbago, myalgia, and other so-called rheumatic troubles. When attacked with acute rheumatism, they are very apt to have endo- or exo-cardial complications. These cases are most successfully treated by the alkaline plan. In, I believe, almost the last paper written by the late Dr. Fuller, which was in opposition to Drs. Gull and Sutton's "mint-water treatment," he insisted strongly on certain points in regard to the use of alkalies, inattention to which had been the cause of failure in the treatment. He says we must give not less than an ounce and a half of the alkaline carbonates, either alone or in combination with a vegetable acid, during the first twenty-four hours of the treatment. This may be prescribed as a drink—a lemonade—by adding lemon juice or citric acid to the solution of the carbonate—two drachms of the carbonates, an ounce of lemon juice, or half a drachm of citric acid, dissolved in four ounces of water, and taken every three or four hours. If the bowels are constipated, he gives compound cathartic pills at bedtime. As soon as the urine, when passed, ceases to exhibit an acid reaction, he reduces the alkali one-half. This reduction of the daily quantity of alkali goes on each day, until the fourth or fifth day, when, if the urine continues to be alkaline, he prescribes bark preparations or quinia, at the same time continuing the alkalies in moderate quantity. If treated on this plan, the class of cases under consideration get well within two weeks, and are often up in a week. Instead of giving the quinia in the small doses of three grains advised by Dr. Fuller, the results are much better if twice that quantity is given every four hours. In these cases, instead of quinia I usually give, after the alkali course, the tincture of iron; and if the attack is a severe one, apply blisters about the principal joints.

The third group of cases consists of vigorous subjects having, in a considerable proportion of them, an inherited tendency. According to my experience, cases of this type are adapted to the action of salicylic acid, and are often relieved with remarkable promptitude by means of it. Salicin is probably nearly as effective, but it must needs be given in such quantity as to be difficult to manage. Scruple doses of salicylic acid seem to be sufficient for most cases of rheumatism, provided they are often enough